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Retail construction underway in Paw Paw

The Paw Paw Retail Center is currently going up on the former site of The Copper Grill, 854 S. Kalamazoo St., Paw Paw. A new restaurant, The Foundation, has announced that it will occupy a site at the location.

Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

National Night Out/Public Safety Professional Night Out attracts many to Paw Paw

"It was a good turnout for National Night Out/Public Safety Professional Night Out in South Haven and Paw Paw. A huge thank you to the community for coming out and all the continued support, it's appreciated more than you know," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott.

SWAT Team members received Letters of Commendation for the pipe bombing incident in Pine Grove Township. "Those awards were well deserved, and I cannot say enough good things about our SWAT Team on what they do," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled an SUV versus Amish buggy crash in Bloomingdale Township. "This was another tragic accident that should have never happened. All six occupants of the buggy were injured, with several of them having very serious or life-threatening injuries. The driver of the SUV was arrested for the incident. Speed and alcohol were a major factor in this crash," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response had a flee and elude in Columbia Township. The suspect driver fled from the deputy, went off road during the pursuit, tried to shake items out of the bed of the truck to lose the deputy, as well as driving at high speeds and recklessly, according to Sheriff Abbott. The suspect was caught and lodged for the incident.

The Draft After-Action Report/Improvement Plan for Holtec came back after a Graded Drill by FEMA. "I am proud to say that the exercise resulted in No Level 1 Findings, No Level 2 Findings, or No Plan Issues for the State of Michigan, Van Buren County, Allegan County, and Berrien County. In short, everyone that was a part of the drill in case of an emergency did their job with no flaws," said Sheriff Abbott.

For the month of July, Dispatch handled 6,434 calls for service, bringing the total for the year to 38,918. Those calls are for wreckers, animal control, fire departments, EMS, police, and misc. Dispatch also took 10,501 phone calls for the month of July, making the year total at 61,579. Uniform Response had 596 traffic stops in July, bringing the year total to 3,031. Uniform Response took 1,013 calls for service in July, bringing them to 5,914 for the year.

"Our office received information about activity at the Van Auken Public Access in Bangor Township. With the information that was given, five of us went to the location after formulating a plan. Without going into detail, it was found a subject wanted on several felonies was in the water. The suspect refused to come in. A deputy was able to get a pontoon boat and come to the access to pick up another deputy and me. We striped off our gun belts and duty shirts and put on life vests from our patrol units expecting a fight in the water. When we were getting ready to jump on the pontoon, the suspect surrendered and walked into shore. He was lodged on three felony charges," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Uniform Response sergeants all have drones in their patrol units and use them on a regular basis. These past few weeks, they have been training with them in down time to stay sharp with them, used during a pursuit, used to photograph a crash scene, etc. Since we put drones into service at our office, their use has been huge in helping us do our jobs," said Sheriff Abbott.

The 2025 Public Safety/Professionals Night was hosted Thursday, Aug. 14, by the Paw Paw Police Department and Tapper Ford. "There was a fantastic turnout with approximately 200 people who came out to meet their Public Safety professionals. We had excellent participation from agencies around the county including Bangor Police Department, Mattawan Police Department, Pokagon Tribal Police, Decatur Police Department, Van Buren EMS, Paw Paw Fire Department, Bronson Hospital, Michigan State Police and the Van Buren Sheriff's Office. Walmart provided water, cookies and bicycles for the bike raffle. We look forward to next year," said Paw Paw Chief of Police, Eric Rottman.

Courier-Leader photos/Paul Garrod

Village Market Food Centers to be acquired by Harding's

The Village Market Food Center in Allegan, Michigan, will soon become a Harding's Market again. Photo from Google Maps.

Jordan Wilcox
Assistant Publisher

In late June, major news broke when SpartanNash announced their sale to a New Hampshire grocery conglomerate. As a Byron Center-based wholesaler for independent grocers and the owner of the Our Family and Family Fare brands, everyone knew that the acquisition would usher in a new era of change in the Southwest Michigan grocery scene.

Now, less than two months later, shoppers in Allegan, Colon, Decatur, and Gobles can expect another change. Harding's Friendly Markets has entered into a tentative agreement to acquire all four of the Village Market Food Centers. Neither chain has made an official announcement yet, but rumors have been stirring, and Wilcox Newspapers was able to corroborate them with some very close sources.

Currently, the four Village Markets are owned by Murk Management out of South Haven, who also own three Village Xpress gas stations and a car wash in South Haven. It is unknown who will keep these after the acquisition.

Harding's Friendly Markets was founded by Mel Harding in 1944 and is headquartered in Plainwell. The group operates an independent chain of 28 grocery stores in cities across southwest Michigan and northern Indiana, including Bangor, Kalamazoo, Hartford, Plainwell, Schoolcraft, Three Rivers, and Wayland.

When news of the acquisition was leaked to the Allegan County Informed Facebook group, many Village Market shoppers expressed a desire to see lower prices and updates to the store. Since both chains are SpartanNash/Our Family affiliates, prices are unlikely to change much. However, Harding's has been working to update the company's stores. In a 2024 interview with Food Chain Magazine, company president Tim Harding had this to say on the topic, "In terms of improving our current portfolio, we are adding between three thousand and five thousand square feet to one of our locations, as well as providing updates as required in terms of modernized equipment and facelifts. We tend to average two or three stores a year undergoing this process."

With no official announcement, the exact date of the changeover is unknown. Many shoppers have already reported seeing Harding's influence in the Allegan and Decatur stores, though, and multiple sources point to the actual transition happening around October 1.

When asked for comment, both Murk Management and Harding's Markets refused to say anything but did state that more information would be released in the near future.

First ever pickleball tournament highlighted festival

By James Windell

Pickleball is one of the fastest growing sports and this was on display when the South Haven Pickleball Club, in conjunction with the National Blueberry Festival, hosted a tournament at Lake Arvesta Farms.

On Thursday, August 7, 2025, 46 competitive players participated in a two-level round-robin, mixed doubles format pickleball tournament. All teams played at least 6 games, with finalists in each division playing additional games. Medals were awarded to the top three teams in each division.

"With the sport growing so quickly, a big goal of our club is to help facilitate the building of more dedicated pickleball courts in South Haven, to be available for our town and community," said Tricia Hudson, the Tournament Director.

Hudson also said that the tournament was a great example of how pickleball is also such a wonderful cross-generational sport. "We had some father-daughter teams and one mother-son team," Hudson said. "Mark and Sophia Nash, our gold medal winners for the 3.0 - 3.5 level, were a father-daughter team from Kalamazoo."

Besides Mark and Sophia Nash as gold medal winners, Michelle and David Weidenbenner won a silver medal, and Sharon Bennett and Don Payerle took the bronze medal. In the higher 3.6 - 4.0 division, Mark Coons and Mary Deitrich won the gold, Cameron and Beth Mohr were the silver medal winners, and Brooke Roller and Scott Keown took home the bronze medal.

"We were thrilled with the turnout and the amount of enthusiasm for our first large tournament," Hudson said. "We had a variety of players from Southwest Michigan as well as players from Indiana and Illinois. And many of our local club players participated in the tourney, representing South Haven and our club very well."

Mark Coons, who along with pickleball partner Mary Dietrich, won the gold in the 3.6 – 4.0 bracket, is a South Haven resident. "This was my second time playing in a pickleball tournament," Coons said, "but this one was a lot bigger and in a much nicer venue. This was a beautiful venue."

Coons added that the South Haven Pickleball Club did a terrific job putting it on and organizing it. "There were a lot of door prizes, and it was really done well," Coons said.

The South Haven Pickleball Club currently has 275 members. "We are an active, community-minded group," Hudson said, "and we teach lessons to students and seniors in the area, organize fundraisers and small club tourneys, host socials throughout the year, and participate in local parades."

To learn more about the South Haven Pickleball Club or to become a member, visit the club's website at https://www.southhavenpickleball.com

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2ND FRONT PAGE

VBISD recognized among top school districts in state

LAWRENCE - Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD) has announced its placement among the top school districts in Michigan, as ranked by Niche. VBISD was recognized as the eighth-best school district in the state, earning this distinction based on rigorous evaluation of multiple performance indicators.

How VBISD Earned This Recognition:

The Niche ranking evaluates school districts on key criteria including academics, quality of teachers, extent of clubs and activities, sports programs, resources and facilities, culture and diversity, and feedback from parents and students. VBISD's consistent strength across these areas contributed to its high standing among Michigan's districts.

VBISD's success stems from its clear mission and comprehensive services. The district's mission is focused on delivering high-quality programs, innovative services, and collaborative leadership that support the success of all learners. The range of offerings includes:

● Career and Technical Education (Van Buren Tech)

VBISD provides 11th and 12th-grade students access to over 25 state-approved CTE programs, which offer college credit, work-based learning, and scholarship opportunities.

● Early Childhood and Special Education Services

From early childhood programs designed to give children a great start, to special education offerings that comply with IDEA and personalize support, VBISD ensures inclusive and equitable educational access.

●Migrant and Multilingual Support VBISD's Migrant Education Program-recognized by the U.S. Department of Education provides tailored support for migratory and multilingual students, including summer programs and ESL services.

● Instructional Services and Professional Development VBISD offers ongoing training and development to educators and leaders through its instructional services department, reinforcing educational excellence across the region.

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Food Drive raises nearly $1200

The 16th annual food drive was held at Family Fare, Paw Paw, on Aug. 8 and 9. Over 50 volunteers from RedArrow Ministries manned 12 hours over the two days. "We were able to fill the trailer with food and when dropped off at Eleanor's Pantry, their shelves were restocked. A total of $1,160.26 was raised to help those with food insecurities as well," said volunteer Tim Davis. Courtesy photos/RedArrow Ministries

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9:00 AM - 1:00 PM FARMERS MARKET AT NORTH OF PARK
10:00 AM CARDIO DRUMMING AT MAIN PAVILION
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM CRAFT SHOW AT ELIZABETH ST
10:00 AM - 9:00 PM BOOK SALE AT OLD TOWN HALL
11:00 AM CHALK THE WALK AT LIBRARY
11:00 AM BIG RIG SHOW REGISTRATION AT E ST. JOSEPH ST
12:00 PM - 6:00 PM BINGO AT EAST PAVILION
12:30 PM - 3:00 PM BIG RIG SHOW AT E ST. JOSEPH ST
1:00 PM BRYNN CUMMINGS, VENTRILOQUIST AT MAIN PAVILION
3:00 PM CHICK AND THE BOOMERS AT MAIN PAVILION
4:00 PM CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT AT PARK
4:00 PM LAWRENCE ALUMNI DINNER AT CONFERENCE CENTER
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM THE KENNEDY AFFAIR- BLUES BAND AT MAIN PAVILION
DUSK LIGHTED TRUCK PARADE AT E ST. JOSEPH STREET

SUNDAY, AUG 31
8:00 AM BREAKFAST AT LEGION HALL
9:00 AM CHURCH SERVICE AT MAIN PAVILION
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM CAR SHOW REGISTRATION AT E ST. JOSEPH ST
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM CRAFT SHOW AT ELIZABETH ST
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM BOOK SALE AT OLD TOWN HALL
11:00 AM - 3:00 PM CAR SHOW AT EAST ST. JOSEPH STREET
12:00 PM PEDAL PULL REGISTRATION AT E ST. JOSEPH ST (ALL AGES)
12:00 PM SEVENTH SON AT MAIN PAVILION
12:00 PM - 6:00 PM BINGO AT EAST PAVILION
1:00 PM PEDAL PULL AT EAST ST. JOSEPH STREET
2:00 PM TWO DOLLAR BILLS AT MAIN PAVILION
4:00 PM VINEYARD CHICKS AT MAIN PAVILION
4:00 PM VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT AT PARK
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM BLACK RIVER BAND AT MAIN PAVILION
DUSK FIREWORKS AT HIGH SCHOOL

MONDAY, SEP 1
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM BOOK SALE AT OLD TOWN HALL
11:00 AM OX ROAST PARADE AT EAST ST. JOSEPH STREET
12:00 PM LUKE LENHART AND GREEN VALLEY BOYS AT MAIN PAVILION
12:00 PM CHICKEN DINNER AT METHODIST CHURCH
1:00 PM FREE OX ROAST SANDWICHES AT AMERICAN LEGION
12:00 PM - 6:00 PM BINGO AT EAST PAVILION
2:00 PM RAFFLE DRAWINGS AT MAIN PAVILION

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BOC approves partnership with Van Buren, St. Joseph counties, WMU to share digital information

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

PAW PAW - On Tuesday, Aug. 12, the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners formally approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the shared Digital Information Departments (Van Buren and St. Joseph counties and Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.

A proposed MOU had been developed to formalize a collaborative partnership among the shared Digital Information Departments and WMU through a structure known as the Digital Innovation Collaborative Exchange (DICE). The MOU outlines commitments including access to regional stakeholders for student interviews and data collection, hosting and supervision of student interns, sharing of datasets and digital tools, participation in panel discussions, organization of student competitions, attendance at quarterly planning meetings, and pursuit of joint grant opportunities.

The partnership will provide valuable experiential learning opportunities for students, support capacity building in regional local governments, and promote innovation in public service delivery without any financial impact on the county.

The shared Digital Information Departments of Van Buren and St. Joseph counties have jointly developed foundational digital infrastructure to support local government service delivery across Southwest Michigan. Many local units of government in the region face significant barriers in accessing resources, talent, and tools necessary to engage with emerging technologies including artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics, digital communications, and community development.

Western Michigan University's School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) and its Center for Excellence and Research in Public Service (CERPS) possess faculty expertise, student engagement channels, and applied research capabilities that complement and strengthen the mission of the shared Digital Information Departments.

The partnership will provide valuable experiential learning opportunities for students, support capacity building in regional local governments, and promote innovation in public service delivery without any financial impact on the county.

In another area, commissioners approved a resolution to authorize the submission of a Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) MI Neighborhood Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application.

Van Buren County received a Funding Designation Memorandum from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) for the MI Neighborhood CDBG Program to support a countywide Homeowner Rehabilitation Program. The county is eligible and has been invited to apply for $472,000 in CDBG funds, consisting of $400,000 for homeowner rehabilitation activities benefiting low and moderate-income households and $72,000 for eligible administrative costs.

The CDBG program requires the adoption of an authorizing resolution identifying the officials authorized to execute grant-related documents and assume responsibility for compliance with all applicable regulations.

Van Buren County is requesting CDBG funding to launch a Housing Rehabilitation Program serving all four cities, seven villages, and 18 townships in the county. The program will assist eligible low- and moderate-income homeowners in owner-occupied single-family homes with urgent health and safety hazards, structural deficiencies, and accessibility barriers. Improvements may include code updates, aging-in-place modifications, energy-efficiency upgrades, and exterior repairs with the goal of improving living conditions, preserving affordable housing stock, revitalizing neighborhoods, and supporting public health and stability.

Commissioners will hold a public hearing Aug. 26, at 12:50 p.m. at 219 E Paw Paw St., Paw Paw, Suite 202, to allow the public to examine and submit comments on the proposed CDBG application, in compliance with program requirements.

Commissioners approved a lease renewal with the Department of Health & Human Services for property at 5710 County Road 681, Hartford.

Van Buren County has continuously leased the premises to the State of Michigan, Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) since Jan. 1, 1991. The original lease expired Dec. 31, 2010, but was extended through Dec. 31, 2015, and subsequently renewed through two additional five-year extensions, with the current term set to expire Dec. 31, 2025. The proposed lease renewal will begin on Jan. 1, 2026, and continue through Dec. 31, 2035, with two optional five-year renewal terms extending through Dec. 31, 2045.

Under the renewed lease agreement, three material modifications have been made, including: (1) removal of space formerly utilized by Safe Harbor from the leased premises; (2) elimination of janitorial services previously provided by the county; and (3) the inclusion of a lump-sum charge of $90,000 for interior painting during the first year of the lease.

The rental consideration for the term of the lease shall be as follows:

- From Jan. 1, 2026, through Dec. 31, 2030, annual rent of $320,947.92, payable monthly at $26,745.66.
- From Jan. 1, 2031, through Dec. 31, 2035, annual rent of $337,171.68, payable monthly at $28,097.64.

If the lessee exercises the first five-year renewal option Jan. 1, 2036, through Dec. 31, 2040, rent shall be $354,100.80 annually, payable monthly at $29,508.40. If the lessee exercises the second five-year renewal option Jan. 1, 2041, through Dec. 31, 2045, rent shall be $371,735.28 annually, payable monthly at $30,977.94.

Citing a critical staffing need in the Animal Control Office due to increased workload and continued operational demands including animal intake, cleaning, euthanasia, call responses, and general animal care, commissioners approved converting the current part-time kennel position to full-time is necessary.

Commissioners said the conversion is necessary to maintain operational efficiency and reduce ongoing overtime costs currently incurred due to staff shortages. The position is classified as an AFSCME General Unit, Range 21 (R21), and the Union has been notified and advised of the proposed conversion. The budgetary impact for the remainder of the current fiscal year will be absorbed entirely by the Sheriff Public Safety Fund (Fund 207), with no financial impact to the County's General Fund.

Commissioners approved an Engagement Letter and Agreement with Maner Costerisan, a company that does the required financial auditing for the county. The county has been using Maner Costerisan for audit services and the previous agreement has expired. This agreement is for services starting immediately through the next three years.

The engagement provides preliminary estimates which maintain the 2025 rate at the 2024 level with a modest three percent annual increase thereafter.

Clevenger files for Michigan State Senate seat

Kenny Clevenger, Allegan County Republican chair, and Casco Township Treasurer, filed 2026 election documents with the Secretary of State, seeking the 20th Michigan Senate seat held by term-limited Senator Aric Nesbitt.

"Michigan residents are suffering. The shifting control of legendary Michigan businesses to out of state, even out of country interests, does not bode well for our future.

Losing jobs and investment is a devastating trend. The next legislature needs experienced hands with proven results laser focused on turning this state around," Clevenger said.

Now in his second term as Casco Treasurer, he previously served on the South Haven School Board, and served a term as the President of the Van Buren Association of School Boards during his tenure.

In Republican Party matters, Clevenger rose from Allegan County GOP Secretary to party Chair in 2022, earning reelection in 2024. His reputation for getting results as a capable organizer and fundraiser helped secure his election as "Chair of Chairs" for the State Party in 2024.

Prior to his government and party involvement, Clevenger was the general manager of the Best Buy electronics store in Benton Harbor. He started as a part-time sales associate in his hometown store in Battle Creek before working his way up to General Manager. After that he started and currently runs a small business.

Clevenger emphasizes a deep commitment to family and community. He and his wife, Jaicie, have been married for nine years and are raising six children. The couple also welcomed his 88-year-old grandfather into their home, embracing the value of multi-generational families.

Clevenger at this point is the only declared candidate. He will campaign in a district that spans parts of Allegan, Berrien, Van Buren, and Kent counties, a region known for its mix of small towns, agricultural communities, and growing economic centers.

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Ganges Twp residents plan to pack meeting to protest RV park

By Gari Voss

The Ganges Township Board will convene on Wednesday, August 27, 2025, at 7pm, with the location will be at the Glenn Community Center in anticipation of a large crowd. The issue that will bring the residents is the establishment of a campground that the residents refer to as an extension of the Campit RV Park while the developers call it Saugatuck Meadows.

Campit RV Park sits on 33 acres about 10 minutes east of Saugatuck. It promotes itself as a campsite that includes Log Cabin rentals, a five-bedroom Bunkhouse B&B, and Vintage Trailers. There is a weekly schedule of events and activities, a large, heated pool, clubhouse, and a variety of other amenities that provide many choices for outdoor recreation and meeting people. As an adult facility, it is open to the Pride community.

In conversations with township residents, the basic premise of Campit is great, but the group, under the ownership of Michael O'Connor, has gone beyond the basic expectations of a campground. Many weekends, the management brings entertainment into the campground. Along with the normal traffic of the renters, there are people attending who do not live at the camp. They park on the property across the street from the entrance which also belongs to O'Connor. The noise level is so loud that people living several miles away can hear it.

Residents have taken concerns about the noise and traffic to the Ganges Township Board because Campit is breaking ordinances related to noise and public "concerts". No steps have been taken that have remedied the present situation of Campit.

Enter Bobbi Jo Beyersdorf who has requested a Special Land Use designation for the property across 118th Avenue from the Campit RV Resort. This property is owned by Michael O'Connor, and O'Connor is in partnership with Beyersdorf. But Beyersdorf has promoted the new campsite as Saugatuck Meadows with plans that it would be a family style resort like the ones she operates in other places.

This is where the residents call "foul" and have come to the Township Board on numerous occasions to request that the new campsite not be approved even though the Zoning Commission says the request is within the parameters of a Special Land Use permit.

Numerous letters have been shared between lawyers for the township and for the developers. There are contradictory opinions regarding whether or not Saugatuck Meadows should be approved. First, a moratorium on campgrounds in Ganges Township was issued by the Township Board, but Saugatuck Meadows was exempt. Second, because of the history of Campit, residents do not feel this would be a safe place for families with young children. Third, the water levels throughout the township have been of a concern without a campground adding to the problems. Fourth, with O'Connor as a partner, there is little trust that the new campground would follow the township ordinances, and since authorities are not making Campit follow the ordinances, there is nothing that would ensure that Saugatuck Meadows would follow the laws of the township.

These are a few points brought forth by the residents. There are others. At the meeting on Wednesday, August 27th, Ganges Township residents will again be given their 2-3 minutes to speak. What they are hoping is that the Township Board not only listens but hears their pleas to deny the establishment of another campground in Ganges Township.

South Haven planners considers controversial housing development

By James Windell

The South Haven Planning Commission agenda called for a public hearing on a proposed rezoning of 120 Baseline Road in north South Haven.

However, when Kelly Getman-Dissette, Zoning Administrator, introduced the item she pointed out that the request for a rezoning by Countryside Estates, LLC, could not advance beyond a public hearing to a vote because there were actually two parcels of land involved. Not only was Countryside Estates asking that 120 Baseline Road be rezoned, but also the adjoining parcel at 2011 Webster Road was also involved in the request. But that public hearing would take place at the September Planning Commission meeting.

Gertman-Dissette, though, explained that Countryside Estates was requesting that the property be rezoned from RM1 multiple family residential to MHC, which is a manufactured housing community district. "There is a proposal to develop a 24-unit manufactured housing community," Getman-Dissette said.

The public hearing on the matter was then initiated. Twenty-four residents over the next 70 minutes voiced their opinion about the proposed rezoning. A great majority of those speaking indicated that they were strongly opposed to the rezoning that would allow a manufactured housing community. Three issues seemed to be most prominent in their comments. One issue was that the development would be a mobile trailer park, and it would result in a decrease in value to homes in the area. The second issue was that such a development would reduce the city's tax base. And a third issue was that the development would increase the demand on the infrastructure as well as cause other kinds of problems – such as greater parking problems and increased traffic.

Some residents indicated they were confused as to whether the proposed development would be a mobile home park or a manufactured housing community with permanent houses. One person suggested that since Mary Hosley served on the Planning Commission but also lived in a house adjacent to the proposed development that she should recuse herself from the discussion.

After all residents who wished to speak were finished, the public hearing ended. A motion was then made by Commissioner Campbell that discussion of the issue by the Planning Commission be postponed until after the second public hearing at the September meeting of the Planning Commission. Hosley added before the vote on the motion that the issue of the "alleged conflict of interest" could be addressed at that time also. The motion was passed.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for Thursday, September 4, 2025 at 7:00 pm in the City Council Chambers.

Rep. Wendzel's alternating proprietorship legislation signed into law

On Friday, Aug. 15, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed Rep. Pauline Wen-dzel's bipartisan legislation that eliminates unnecessary red tape, reduces operating costs for distillers and mixed spirit manufacturers in the state, and makes it easier for them to ex-pand their businesses.

"Michigan's small businesses should be able to work together to keep costs low and grow their businesses," said Governor Whitmer. "This bipartisan bill will help our distiller and mixed spirit manufacturers do just that by cutting unnecessary red tape. This will lower costs for these businesses and boost our economy by making it easier for more people to make it in Michigan. I'll keep working with anyone to lower costs and support Michiganders across the state."

House Bill 4403, sponsored by state Representative Wendzel (R-Watervliet), cuts unnecessary red tape and supports Michigan's small businesses by allow-ing distillers and mixed spirit manufacturers to use the same space and equipment to make their products. This change allows these business owners to enter into agreements to share expensive costs like rent, utilities, and equipment with one another. Not only will this support small businesses by lowering costs, but it will also incentivize more manufacturers to come to our state to build their business, boosting Michigan's economy.

"This bill is a testament to what we can accomplish when we work together," said state Representative Wendzel. "The unanimous support it received in the House and Senate shows that helping our small businesses and local job creators is a shared priority. By clarifying the law around alternating proprietorships, we're not just supporting distillers; we're fostering innovation and ensuring Michigan's craft beverage industry can continue to grow and thrive."

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VIEWPOINT

Why So Many Michiganders Under 30 Can't Afford a House

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX ■ PUBLISHER ■

The dream of homeownership, once a clear stepping stone into adulthood, now feels like a mirage for many Michiganders under 30. Despite living in a state often touted for its affordability, structural barriers have erased much of the margin that once gave younger buyers a fighting chance.

Believe it or not, Michigan home prices are on the rise. As of July 2025, the median home price in the state is $292,600, up 5.6% year-over-year according to Redfin. In 2022, the state's median home value stood at $224,400, a 50% increase since 2012.

Meanwhile, wage growth hasn't kept pace. Michigan's median household income hovers around $50,800, with a per-capita income of about $27,550. That stark disparity means that housing becomes less affordable over time, especially for younger adults who are just beginning their financial journeys.

What's striking to me is that in the 1950's homeownership for those 30 and under stood at nearly 50%. But now that percentage has sunk below 30 percent.

I remember buying my first home at 25. I didn't have a large income but managed to weasel a small downpayment from my savings, and made it happen. After all it made more sense to buy a home than pay rent, especially when the monthly mortgage payment was below my previous rent payment.

But that was then, and now times have changed. The gap between wages and housing has increased dramatically. Combine that with the current high mortgage interest rates and unless you are a tech millionaire, housing is unaffordable for the 30 and under crowd.

For instance, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, a full-time worker would need to earn $24.46 per hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment at fair market rental, which is nearly double the state's minimum wage of $12.48. That forces minimum wage workers to take on nearly 78 hours per week of work just to cover rent. Mind you we are talking about rent; home ownership would be an even bigger hurdle.

In counties that Wilcox Newspapers serves nearly half of homes were built before 1970. Even if you have the downpayment and can afford the monthly mortgage, buyers face steep renovation and maintenance costs—even if the sticker price is relatively low (around $153,500.) These hidden expenses make many affordable-looking houses financially precarious for low-income or first-time buyers.

Young adults often carry student loan debt, have limited savings, and don't benefit from generational wealth transfers. Though some older homeowners benefit from historically low mortgage rates or inherited equity, these advantages seldom extend to those under 30 unless they're exceptionally fortunate.

In summary for Michiganders under 30, the dream of owning a home is being squeezed from both ends: rising prices on one side and stagnant incomes, debt, and unaffordable rent on the other. Even in areas with lower cost burdens, the structural hurdles—debt, savings, credit histories, lack of inherited equity—leave many young people locked out.

What needs to be done:

Stronger affordable housing policies and down payment assistance.

Higher minimum wages aligned with the real cost of living.

Incentives to convert aging housing stock into livable, affordable homes.

Programs to help young adults build credit, savings, and equity. Although I list this last, it is the most important. Many young adults have not had to endure a Civics class in high school therefore know little about building credit and saving money.

Without bold, targeted action, the American Dream in Michigan and the U.S. risks becoming a fading myth for the under-30 crowd.

Life as Performance Art

G CORWIN STOPPEL

Joan Anderson died July 14 at age 101. Her name might not be familiar anymore, but she was a great social influencer in the late 1950s and beyond.

Anderson, a native of Australia, flew home at Christmastime 1956 to visit family and was amused at watching children have fun with a bamboo hoop.

It took just a few minutes to learn how to position it in the right area on their torso, then jiggle their hips to it twirl, and it seemed an exercise they enjoyed.

Although there were no set rules, the longer a child could make the hoop twirl, the better. Groups were twirling them on playgrounds and in parks, making them a hot ticket item for Christmas presents.

When Anderson returned home to California, she told her family about the hoop and her husband suggested she ask her family in Australia to send her one. When it arrived, the letter carrier was not amused and thought it was a waste of good money to have it shipped.

This being the mid-1950s, he added it might be some communist plot to take over America. This was when people feared commies were hiding under every bush and suspected anything "furren."

The Andersons thought otherwise. Their four children spent hours perfecting the twirl and sometimes allowed a friend to play with it. One day someone said the gyrations looked like Hawaiian hula dancers, thus the name "Hula Hoop."

Father Wayne Anderson's friend Spud Melin co-owned of a toy company called Wham-O. The previous year they had brought out the must-have Christmas present of 1955, the Frisbee. Now they were looking for a new item.

The Andersons demonstrated the hoop to Melin and he liked it. A gentleman's agreement, sealed with nothing more than a handshake, cemented the business deal. Wham-O would manufacture and market the toy with the Andersons sharing in the royalties.

The timing could not have been better. A few weeks earlier Elvis Presley had been a guest on the highly-popular Ed Sullivan Show but the executives were horrified at how he gyrated his hips at his stage shows. They though his "Elvis the Pelvis" nickname was salacious, suggestive and not fit for prime time audiences. The camera angle was set so it did not show his famous move.

Young people, objecting to the network censorship, bought so many Hula Hoops that Wham-O worked overtime to keep up with production.

Within six months, some 30 million Hula Hoops had been sold, retailing at $1.98, each. What kept sales surging was that people learned if twirling one hoop was a good idea, twirling more at the same time was even better.

Spud hinted that using a Hula Hoop was part of a youthful rebellion against the olds, right along with rock and roll music, comic books, biker gangs and slang. That made it even more popular.

During afternoon game shows and soap operas, Spud advertised the hoop to the housewife audience, touting how it would burn calories and create a more enticing "silhouette."

All was not pure happiness. It seems Spud and Wham-O stiffed the Andersons. They smelled a rat when they were not allowed to see any of the company's financial records and Spuds grew distant.

The couple were written out of the story and did not see the promised checks. Melin took all the credit for discovering the hoop, development and marketing. The Andersons sued, and when the judge rapped his gavel and all the legal fees were paid, they received about $6,000. The Andersons never spoke to their former friend again.

Their big mistake was trusting a close friend when money was involved. Mr. Anderson said later they should have committed everything on paper and had retained rights to the patent.

Fortunately, neither of the Andersons were bitter about it, nor did it dictate the rest of their life. Believing that happiness is success is the best revenge, the couple "stuck it" to their former friend, who was not enjoying much happiness despite all his money.

As for Spud Melin and Wham-O, they went on to invent, develop and market a number of very successful low-priced toys that were popular with children. They continued bring out new items over the next couple decades until the company was bought out by Mattel, and it was sold by a succession of companies over the years. It is now owned by a Chinese conglomerate.

Mr. Anderson died at age 87. One day his daughter was talking with a friend about her family and the true story of Hula Hoop.

A woman sitting at a nearby table, Lois Hill, overheard and introduced herself. She said she made independent films and knew the family's story would be a good one. Her 10-minute minute "Hula Girl" documentary premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2018. You can find it on YouTube now.

Fortunately, Joan Anderson, then 97 years old, was able to attend the premier. She spoke about the early days of the Hula Hoop and brought along her original bamboo toy. When she demonstrated her skills with it, the crowd gave her a standing ovation.

As the late Paul Harvey would say on his radio program, "And now you know the rest of the story."

Your day has been enriched by this bit of trivia. For however long it took you to read these 1,000 words, you were not thinking about the economy, politics or anything else unpleasant.

You can thank me later.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Conflict of interest at state level- look at Hertels

Dear Editor,

The July 10 editorial about four state legislators married to lobbyists was revealing - and horrifying.

It's all true about the conflict of interest. Still, voters do have transparency options for lobbyists. It's not that difficult.

When a pharmaceutical lobbyist for top-tier drugs testifies about their extreme risk and asks for more barriers to competition, most us understand that their first priority is health and safety - not of patients, but of their bottom line.

Wander over to legislature.mi.gov/Committees/Meetings. Choose the House, and you can pick a topic such as Agriculture, Families & Veterans, or Health. These hearings are recorded. The "Minutes" tab and video archives record names of those who testify, the organization they represent, and the bill(s) they address. You can read what they submit under "Testimony."

Lansing gets even more entertaining if you choose to visit the senate committees. For instance, lawmakers direct nearly half ($38 Billion) of Michigan's 2025 budget to the Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

Director Elizabeth Hertel began at CMH in 2013 before it merged with MDHHS. Lawmakers approved her as Gov. Whitmer's pick for MDHHS director in 2021.

She now answers to her brother-in-law, Senator Kevin Hertel, in his position as Health Policy Committee Chair.

Before Kevin, his brother Curtis Hertel Jr. (Director Hertel's husband) served on the same committee from 2015–22. He went on to become Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's top lobbyist.

According to Wikipedia, "Less than a week after resigning from the Whitmer administration, where he had negotiated the state's $82 billion budget, Hertel took a role at the nonprofit Greater Flint Health Coalition, which was expected to benefit from the state budget in the form of a $1.5 million grant. Hertel denied that his involvement in the state budget included knowledge of the $1.5 million budget appropriation earmarked for the Greater Flint Health Coalition. According to The Detroit News, the arrangement 'puts a spotlight on the close, behind-the-scenes relationships between groups seeking assistance from state government and officials in positions to provide it.' "

To give you a better idea of this dynasty's scope, the current senator's father Curtis Hertel Sr. and his brothers also served as Michigan legislators, and one of them in Congress. It would require a book to cover all the bases, and of course the history is still being written.

It's your government. Keep an eye on it.

Abigail Nobel

Reader claims Young's letter is folly

Editor

John Young's letter to this paper is a classic example of the way MAGAs deal with information they don't like. Rather than attempt to refute the information presented with facts, he simply announces that he "won't address" them because they are "rantings regarding issues that have already been disproven or are simply without merit". This is just his version of Trump's "fake news" or "it's a Democratic hoax" approach. I ask what is "disproven or …simply without merit" about:

•Violating the 1st Amendment rights of media companies?

•Violating the 5th and 14th amendment right to due process of residents apprehended, detained, and deported?

•Giving false information in court and defying court orders they don't like?

•Using the power of the presidency to:

oenrich Trump and his family in violation of the emoluments clause of the Constitution?

ocoerce colleges, universities, and law firms to submit to his demands?

These have certainly not been "disproven" nor are they "without merit". Call me old-fashioned, but I think that we should be extremely concerned about a government that regularly lies, breaks the law, and violates the Constitution.

As for the Epstein mess… This is another example of the "fake news" approach. Trump proclaims that it is a "Democratic hoax". Mr. Young uses words like "nonsensical", "false", "cowardly and small" to describe the interest of the American people to find out why Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislane Maxwell were able to operate a sex trafficking business for more than a decade; an operation in which hundreds of girls were trafficked for sex with who knows how many clients and yet none of those clients have been charged with a crime.

Why are Americans interested in whether their president was one of those clients? Trump was friends with Epstein for at least 15 years and stated that Epstein was "a terrific guy" and "a lot of fun to be with." Trump also said Epstein shared his interest in beautiful, younger women. There are many photos and videos of Trump, Epstein, and Maxwell together at parties. And we all remember Trump stating that he could grab women by their genitals because he was famous.

The administration bragged that they were going to release the files and that the "Epstein list" was on the Attorney General's desk. Then, suddenly, we learned that Trump's name was in the files and, before you could blink, the Department of Justice announced that there was nothing new to share and that the case was closed. Shortly after that announcement, the attorney that had handled the prosecution of these two creeps was fired and the Deputy Attorney General hurried to Florida to interview Maxwell with only Maxwell and her attorney in the room. A week later Maxwell was moved to a cushy, lower security prison in Texas where sexual predators are not normally allowed. You don't have to be a conspiracy theorist to suspect a cover-up.

The government's request to release the grand jury testimony, which Mr. Young claimed as proof that Trump wasn't hiding the files, was denied and in his decision the judge wrote that "[the government's] entire premise — that the Maxwell grand jury materials would bring to light meaningful new information about Epstein's and Maxwell's crimes, or the Government's investigation into them — is demonstrably false." It is "aimed not at 'transparency' but at diversion — aimed not at full disclosure but at the illusion of such." The bottom line here is that the Trump administration has full authority to release the files from the government's investigation of the Epstein/Maxwell operation and they are refusing to do it.

Finally, Mr. Young's claims about Trump's popularity and the economy are laughable. His overall approval rating in a recent Gallup survey was 37%. His "welcome" from the Scottish people a week or so ago didn't look much like respect for a global leader. And, the total number of jobs created in May and June were forecast to be about 245,000; the actual number of jobs created totaled 33,000. Inflation rate ticked up from 2.4% in May to 2.7% in June. The full effect of Trump's tariffs are beginning to be felt. This will only get worse.

Tim Martin – Decatur Township

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SPORTS

Gobles football will be a 'hungry team'

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Gobles had a hungry football team last year and it could be the same this season.

Greg Eichler is coach of a squad that bad an undefeated regular season and reached the state playoffs for the third consecutive season.

As for graduates, Mason Mansfield, Preston Misak, Jack Geiger and Carter Bell will be missed.

"Mansfield has been one of the better backs to come through Gobles in recent years," Eichler said. "Bell and Geiger have led the offensive line for several years now, and Preston Misak established himself as a great leader for the team."

Key returning players are:

—RB/LB Senior Nathan Ray- Offense: 42 rushing attempts, 456 rushing yards, 7 rushing TDs, 3 receptions for 39 yards and 1 REC TD. Defense: 64 tackles (17 TFL), 3.5 sacks, 16 QB hurries, 1 INT.

—RB/LB/DB Senior Steven Juarez- Offense: 45 rushing attempts, 323 rushing yards, 4 rushing TDs, 3 receptions for 49 yards. Defense: 50 tackles (4 TFL), 0.5 sacks, 4 QB hurries, 5 pass deflections, 1 FF.

—RB/DB Senior Aiden Beam- 70 KO for a total of 2,821 yards and 5 touchbacks. 14-15 on PATS. 3 KR for 16 yards. Defense: 3 INTs, 39 tackles, 1 TFL, and 8 pass deflections. Offense: 1 REC TD.

—OL/DL Senior Tucker Greffe- Offense: 36 pancake blocks.

—OL/LB Senior AJ Salinas- Offense: 23 pancake blocks. Defense: 64 tackles (16 TFL), 1.5 sacks, 5 QB hurries, 2 pass deflections, 1 FR, 1 FF.

—RB/LB Senior Devin Doorlag- "played a lot of JV last season, but stepped in during big moments last season," Eichler said. "State qualifying wrestler and expected to have a big senior season.

—TE/DL Senior Brett Ivester- "had a great off-season and has gotten much stronger and faster. Looks to be a strong presence on the offensive line and someone who can create matchup issues with his athletic ability.

Top newcomers: RB/LB Junior Hunter Piper, TE/DL Sophomore Thomas Burrell, RB/DB

Freshman Case Lord, RB/DL Senior Aiden Dukes, OL/DL Junior Zach Conner

Key departures: Mason Mansfield, Carter Bell, Jack Geiger, Preston Misak

"I expect them to be a hungry team that plays with a chip on their shoulder. They are a close group, and I know they will play for each other and fight week in and week out.

Experience and senior leadership will team strengths and Goble, Eichler said, needs to work on "eliminating self-imposed and mental mistakes."

In the league, "We can compete with anyone," Eichler said. "I am sure several teams will fight for the conference, but we will be right there and ready to fight anyone for it."

Paw Paw tennis team stops West Catholic

By John Raffel

PAW PAW — Paw Paw's boys tennis team defeated Grand Rapids West Catholic 5-3 in recent action.

Singles

No. 1 - Kyle Carpenter, Grand Rapids West Catholic def. Terrance Fisher, Paw Paw, 6-0, 6-0.

No. 2 - Eric Fitchpatrick, Paw Paw def. Crew VanBeynen, Grand Rapids West Catholic, 0-6 , 6-4, 10-7.

No. 3 - Patrick Latchana, Grand Rapids West Catholic def. Zach Mahan, Paw Paw, 3-6, 6-4, 10-3.

No. 4 - Gabe Nicholson, Grand Rapids West Catholic def. Braden Schultz, Paw Paw, 6-0, 6-0.

Doubles

No. 1 - Isaac Geffre, Paw Paw - Anderson Farnquist, Paw Paw def. Jake Overbeek, Grand Rapids West Catholic - Nick Christopher, Grand Rapids West Catholic, 6-2, 7-6 (3).

No. 2 - Simon Geffre, Paw Paw - Ethan Groner, Paw Paw def. Maksym Zimmerman, Grand Rapids West Catholic - Alex Devries, Grand Rapids West Catholic, 6-3, 6-1.

No. 3 - Bryn Carlsen, Paw Paw - Brevyn Wisenski, Paw Paw def. Luke Latchana, Grand Rapids West Catholic - Lucas Shultz , Grand Rapids West Catholic, 6-4, 6-3.

No. 4 - Jude Webster, Paw Paw - Connor Esman, Paw Paw def. Gus Bernreuter, Grand Rapids West Catholic - Anthony Maslanka, Grand Rapids West Catholic, 6-2, 6-4 .

Paw Paw also lost 5-3 to Allegan.

Singles

No. 1 - Silas Neldon, Allegan def. Terrance Fisher, Paw Paw, 2-0, 2-0.

No. 2 - Ezra Smith, Allegan def. Eric Fitchpatrick, Paw Paw, 6-3, 6-0.

No. 3 - Zach Mahan, Paw Paw def. Carson Wooodhams, Allegan, 6-0, 6-2.

No. 4 - John DeLaet, Allegan def. Braden Schultz, Paw Paw, 6-3, 0-6, 24-22.

Doubles

No. 1 - Isaac Geffre, Paw Paw - Anderson Farnquist, Paw Paw def. Noah Kuebler, Allegan - Ian Gaulke, Allegan, 6-2 , 6-1.

No. 2 - Wesley Goodspeed, Allegan - Oliver Burnett, Allegan def. Ethan Groner, Paw Paw - Simon Geffre, Paw Paw, 6-2 , 6-7 (6), 10-7.

No. 3 - Gage Mashburn, Allegan - Charlie Morris, Allegan def. Bryn Carlsen, Paw Paw - Brevyn Wisenski, Paw Paw, 6-4 , 7-5.

No. 4 - Jude Webster, Paw Paw - Connor Esman, Paw Paw def. Sully Morgan, Allegan - Noah Willett, Allegan, 6-1, 6-1.

Paw Paw also defeated North Muskegon 7-1

Singles

No. 1 - Kaden Bartolameolli, North Muskegon def. Terrance Fisher, Paw Paw, 6-3, 6-2.

No. 2 - Eric Fitchpatrick, Paw Paw def. Gavin Miller, North Muskegon, 7-5, 6-3.

No. 3 - Zach Mahan, Paw Paw def. Sean McManus, North Muskegon, 6-3 , 6-0.

No. 4 - Braden Schultz, Paw Paw def. Default Default, North Muskegon, 2-0, 2-0.

Doubles

No. 1 - Anderson Farnquist, Paw Paw - Isaac Geffre, Paw Paw def. Kylan Nielsen, North Muskegon - Bobby Gaston, North Muskegon, 6-3, 6-3.

No. 2 - Simon Geffre, Paw Paw - Ethan Groner, Paw Paw def. Emery Price, North Muskegon - Chase Yeager, North Muskegon, 6-2 , 6-2.

No. 3 - Brevyn Wisenski, Paw Paw - Bryn Carlsen, Paw Paw def. Noah Rosema, North Muskegon - Caden Sytek, North Muskegon, 6-1, 6-2.

No. 4 - Jude Webster, Paw Paw - Connor Esman, Paw Paw def. Max Brown, North Muskegon - Walter Christophersen, North Muskegon, 6-0 , 6-0

Mattawan football seeks another winning season

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Mattawan football coach Jerry Schultz was impressed with what his team achieved last season and can't wait to kick off 2025.

"We had the first winning record since 2018 (7-4), we hosted and

won our first playoff game since 2012, and increased numbers to 90 plus kids."

Connor O'Rourke, Preston Shackelford, Troy Scarff, Connor Vernon, Brody Hergott, Jake Tungate, Max Lawson, Jayden Barker, Aiden Robinson, Spencer Stiles and Kellan Wilder were key graduates.

"All of these players were part of the rebuild of the Mattawan football program. They made sacrifices with position changes and different schemes. All of these players are not only great football players but great young men," Schultz said.

Key players will be: Will Peterson Sr. FB/MLB, Nick DeYoung Sr. Wing/Safety, Patrick Dougherty Sr. Wing/Corner, Nolan Jominy Sr. QB/Corner, Robert Measel Sr. OL/DL, Reid Christiansen Sr. OL/DL, Jackson Kalleward Sr. OL/DL and Daniel Watson Sr. OL/DL.

"We have team goals that we set to achieve during the season," Schultz said. "We always focus on building a family within the program. Next, we want to be academic all state. As for wins, we look to have a winning season and make the playoffs as an expectation of the program.

"The players have really bought into the family mindset. We had a great off season for winter, spring and summer. Year two of both offense and defense, so experience is better. The boys had a taste of the playoffs and are working hard to get back for another year. We lost a ton of talent from last year's team. We need to gel as a unit and prepare for another great season."

Mattawan plays in the Southwestern Michigan Athletic Conference.

"We have one of the strongest conferences in the state. The conference is split into two divisions. Our side of the division had all five teams make the playoffs; seven of our nine opponents made the playoffs last season," Schultz said. "We are looking forward to another great season on and off the field."

The season kicks off at Vicksburg on Aug. 28.

Bloomingdale runners eye league success

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BLOOMINGDALE — Bloomingdale High School cross country coach Alan Bobalik is looking for his team's to have success in the Southwest 10 Conference.

"The 2024 season was a strong season for the Cardinal cross country teams," Bobalik said. "The boys finished fourth in the conference with a total of five runners earning some form of All-Conference Honors. The girls placed 5th in the conference and had one runner earn first team all-conference honors.

"This was a huge improvement from 2023 when we were not able to field a girls team. The biggest highlights were seeing the senior boys wrap up some strong careers. Kelsey Simms, Josh Odell, and Reed Remington were great captains and won multiple conference titles during their high school careers. They upheld the high standard of hard work and positivity that embodies the program."

Bobolink added:

"For the girls the highlight was having a team again. The girls were led by seniors Alyssa Hernandez-Garcia and Nayla Sustaita and it was a great group of girls that improved so much throughout the season.

"The 2025 season will be a year of transition for our teams. Assistant coach Tina Bertuca retired from teaching and coaching. She was the assistant coach for the last nine years and was beloved by all the runners. She will be greatly missed but her shoes will be filled by newcomer Nathalie Yanes."

Bobalik said it will be "the first time coaching cross country for Yanes but she brings experience from coaching track and is known for her infectious energy around school and has already become a favorite of the runners."

For the boys this fall Zach Danes and James Odell will take over as captains and Connor Huff will look to improve on his strong first year performance in 2024.

"They have worked hard all summer and they are looking forward to making big leaps in their performance," Bobalik said. "First-time runners Gage Carlson, Bradyn Bard, and Doug Weishuhn will have a steep learning curve but they will help round out the new look squad this year. Aiden Filegar will make the jump from middle school to high school and help provide depth to the team.

"The girls will be led by senior Maria Ramirez. She was a top 10 runner in the conference in her first year as a runner in 2024. She has been dedicated all summer and I believe a special year could be in store for her this fall. Brianna Marin-Gomez and Yahairi Perales also return and can be counted on to give 100 percent effort every time they lace up their shoes and they have helped create an awesome team culture."

Joining them are newcomers Emma Reynolds, Janet Andrade, Lucy Salazar, and Day Grimaldo.

"The success will depend largely on how quickly the new runners can get acclimated but I have no doubt that they will do everything they can to improve everyday," Bobalik said. "The strength of the team will be running as a pack, we won't have anyone competing to winning races but if we can bunch our runners together in competitive groups I think we can overachieve compared to what the competition thinks we are capable of.

"With a lot of first time runners we'll need to work on just understanding what it feels like to race a 5k. It's rough on the body and mind so the sooner we can adapt the better we will be. With the group that we have out I have no doubt that the runners will be up to the challenge."

He said the Southwest 10 Conference will be tough this year.

"The Centreville squads have a lot of depth and top end talent and will be tough to beat. Bangor always fields competitive teams and should be right there to challenge the Bulldogs. And you can never count out Hartford. I always enjoy checking times after the first couple meets to see which teams found new runners and which returning runners have made the proverbial 'leap.' It should be another fun fall of racing in the Southwest 10."

Eichler a unique football coach

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Greg Eichler has had stunning success as Gobles football coach and there appears to be no end in sight.

He's going into his fifth season.

Highlights for Eichler have included "building excellent relationships with my players, building the program back into a winning program and competing against great competition.

"I have coached basketball and track at Gobles, middle school basketball and flag football in Glendale, Arizona, and football at KWalled Lake Western," he said. "I enjoy watching kids turn into the best versions of themselves and become successful human beings.

"I played high school football and basketball. I went on to play one year of football at Adrian College. No major honors, although I was an all-division LB at Walled Lake Western."

How much has coaching changed over the years?

"I am not sure if it has changed," Eichler said. "I believe it still comes down to building strong relationships, being a life long learner, and teaching leadership. Those are just a few of the most important aspects of coaching in my opinion."

Paw Paw soccer team 1-1

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Paw Paw's boys soccer team was 1-1 at the Justin Bailey Memorial Boys Soccer Shootout on Aug. 16.

The first game of the day was against Portage Northern and the Wolves won 1-1. Portage Northern came out on the attack but the defense held strong. Santiago Nava Aviles dribbled into space before playing a long ball to Enzo Tavela.

Tavela fought with the defender to the ball before poking it loose to Grant Sholander who buried it past an out of position goalie. The offense had several more good chances that they couldn't finish. The defense locked in for a 1-0 win.

The second game was against Battle Creek Lakeview and a 3-1 loss. The heat was extreme and tough to manage and lots of JV players got valuable playing time. The scoring started after several near misses. Nava Aviles played a ball over top of the defense to a Tavela who settled and buried the ball past the keeper. Lakeview scored the equalizer with seconds left on the clock before half time.

Lakeview found the back of the net twice more while our boys narrowly missed. After a strong start to the season the boys look forward to road games this week away at Mattawan and Hartford.

Mattawan football coach enjoys enormous success

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Jerry Schultz had a very successful first season with Mattawan and hopes to continue it this season.

"We had the first winning record since 2018, we hosted and won our first playoff game since 2012, increased numbers to 90-plus kids," Schultz said. "I enjoy building relationships with the players that are beyond football. I want to create an environment where kids remember events not only on the field, but as a team off the field."

Schultz played four years (three years varsity) at Penn High School in Indiana.

"I also ran track for four years (four years on varsity)," Schultz said. "I was awarded a captain for the track team during my senior season. I played one year of college football at Indiana University before a major knee injury that ended my career."

Schultz has noticed how much football has changed over the years.

"Relationships and team bonding are essential to kids playing sports. That has changed since the early 2000s when I was in high school," he said.

Lawton coach has had impressive career

By John Raffel
Correspondent

Kris Bullock has had an impressive 26-year career at coach for Lawton cross country.

The team won the state championship in 2001 and was runner-up in 2002. Bullock has also coached middle school track, JV baseball and middle school football, all at Lawton

When it comes to coaching, Bullock likes "helping kids improve and sharing in the joy of their success.

Bullock ran cross country in high school and has noticed a change over the years in the number of kids playing sports year-round, and decrease in kids participating.

From last year's team, Bullock recalls "Miley Torres was a dedicated off-season runner.

As for this season, "I am hoping junior Anika Weurding can see improvement after a solid summer of running," said Bullock who is looking forward "to continue to enjoy the training experience.

Bullock said the league is very strong. Saugatuck and Black River head the boys teams and Gobles and Naugatuck the girls team.

Lawton runners include: Anika Weurding, junior; Derek Ruimveld, senior; Levi Brooks, senior and Noah Withers, junior.

Bangor football coach likes team's prospects

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Ryan Casey is coaching Bangor's football team which plays in the Southwest Michigan 8-man Football League

Casey was not with the program last year but realizes there were some major contributors.

"Liam Mortensen and Chalmers Davis I know were big contributors to the program in previous years. Watching film, I could tell they were a couple of kids that could impact a game," Casey said.

Key players will be four seniors: Wyatt Schneider, RB/LB; Jorge Dominguez, QB/LB; Brenden Jackson, RB/LB and Terrence Payne, TE/LB.

"I expect big things out of this group. Jorge is the on-field general on both offense and defense so I expect him to play as an extension of the coaching staff," Casey said. "Wyatt, Brendon and a couple others will be expected to carry the ball quite a bit on offense. They've taken to it and they have a decent understanding of why we are doing things a certain way to get a certain outcome.

"Terrence is new to our football program this year after a mid-year transfer in the winter of 24-25. He can play a number of positions on both sides of the ball and is eager to play where he is needed."

Practices started for Bangor on Aug. 11. The first game is at Battle Creek St. Philip on Aug. 28.

"We are expecting a decent turnaround from last year," Casey said. "Our guys are going to play fast and simple. They're going to play as a team and play for each other. Due to those things we expect to surprise some teams this year and have a lot of fun doing it.

"Our strength is going to be how simple we have made things. Our guys won't have to think as much and with that will be able to play more free. We should have a solid group on both sides of the ball."

The team needs to work on tackling, Casey said.

"One of the first thing I noticed when I started watching film of our guys from last year was tackling," Casey said. "We started working on tackling fundamentals over the summer and we have done some form of tackling drills every day since practice started.

"Our conference is split into a couple of divisions. We have strong teams in ours like Bridgman and a couple of teams from the Grand Rapids area. The other division has teams like Marcellus, Gobles and Martin who were all playoff teams in 2024."

New Bangor football coach optimistic

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Ryan Casey is looking forward to the challenges he will encounter as Bangors' new 8-player football coach.

"This will be my first year coaching at Bangor along with my

first year as a head coach," Casey said. "The highlights we have had so far this summer are how smoothly the guys took to the new schemes on both sides

of the ball. They love we have systems in place that play off each other and they've jumped in with both feet."

Casey's coaching background is very impressive.

"I spent 2023 and 2024 as co-AD and head track coach at Countryside Academy in Benton Harbor," Casey said. "I've also coached the throwers for the track in at Portage Central in 2014. At both schools I was able to help numerous kids reach PR's in numerous events, especially in throwing events. At Countryside we also had a girl's discus and a boys shot put Conference Champion along with the girls 4x100 relay placing at Regionals in 2023."

What do you enjoy most about coaching?

"I really enjoy the chess match of every game," Casey said. "Being strategic in everything you do always looking for your next move. Outside of that I also love taking a team and helping them develop not only into the best athletes they can be but also helping them to bond to be beyond just a team.

"In high school I threw for the track team for four years and was a four-year lettermen. I also played football all four years. I was honored to play in the MHSFCA East-West All Star game in 2007. I was a South Bend Tribune Sportsfest All-Star in the summer of 2007 as well. I played college football at Adrian College in 2007. I transferred to Trine University and was part of a 3x MIAA Championship and NCAA Playoff qualifying football team."

Casey point out the 2008 team has been inducted into the Trine University Athletic Hall of Fame and the 2010 team will be inducted this fall. How much has coaching changed over the years?

"I think coaching has really changed from being so focused on the physical aspects of athletics to focusing on the mental game as well. Yes, we want our players to be as big, fast, and strong as they can be, but we also want them to want to be those things as well," Casey said. "You can't just line kids up and run them until they're sick like years before.

"Coaching has really turned into recruiting your own players, making them feel wanted and part of something bigger than themselves. It's not just about being an athlete anymore. To be successful, kids need to feel like they are doing it for a purpose."

Lawton football set to be very strong

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWTON — AJ High expects to have a winning football team at Lawton this season.

Lawton competes in the SAC Valley Conference.

Key graduates from last year "Mason Mayne, Cole Burk, Austin Garcia, Hayden Merriman, Adrian Mata, and Tim Willoughby were all named all conference from a year ago, and they will be difficult to replace," High said. "Mason Mayne was our first Division 1 football player in school history (Northwestern). However, we have a large, experienced, and talented group coming back this year."

Key returners:

Sr. Greyson Burrous RB/DB, Sr. Jack Fletcher TE/LB,

Sr. Caiden Mitchell RB/LB, Sr. Owen Matthies RB/FS,

Sr. Rocky Karsen TE/LB, Sr. Hyden Markle OL/DL,

Sr. Brady Quick QB/DB, Sr. Chase Triemstra K/P, Sr.

Caleb McLemore OL/DL, Sr. Ethan Middleton OL/DL,

Sr. Brayden Russell TE/LB, Jr. Carter Chisholm OL/LB, Jr. Tyler McCartney RB/WR/DB.

Top newcomers: Jr. Hudson Merriman RB/WR/DB, Jr.

Wyatt Streeter RB/WR/DB, Jr. Cody Pollock OL/LB,

Jr. Holden Arnold OL/DL, So. Dillon Carlson QB/DB,

So. Damion Reyna OL/DL, So. Braylon Williams OL/DL.

"We expect to compete and win every game on our schedule, and play our physical aggressive brand of football," High said. "This is probably the fastest overall team speed we have ever had."

"Developing some new Offensive and Defensive Lineman" will be critical, High said.

"The SAC will be tough once again. We will compete with a loaded Schoolcraft squad for the conference title," High said.

High has been coaching football at Lawton since 2019 season (going into 7th season), Offensive Coordinator for the first four years, then became head coach after the 3rd game of the 2023 season.

"We have made the playoffs for six straight seasons, won our conference four out of the last six seasons, won two district titles, a regional title, and were state finalists in 2021," High said. Overall record of 56-12 since 2019.He is assistant varsity track coach (boys/girls),

High said he enjoys player development- "Helping players to reach their potential on and off the field as they come up through our program."

VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICES FOR 2025-2026

The following annual public notices cover all of the programs and services offered by the Van Buren Intermediate School District, including the Van Buren Tech, Bert Goens Learning Center, Special Services Center, Maple Creek Education Center, Community-based Transition Center; Early Care and Education Programs, ESL/Migrant Programs, and Special Education Services.

ASBESTOS HAZARD EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT (AHERA)

Villa Environmental completed an inspection on January 2, 2024, of all remaining asbestos-containing materials in district facilities. This inspection and routine six-month inspections performed by district personnel are part of our Management Plan. Asbestos materials were confirmed in the Bert Goens Learning Center, Van Buren Tech, and Special Services Center. They were found to be in good condition and present no danger to students, staff, or visitors. When any changes occur, employees and parents will be promptly notified. Parents who wish to review the district's Management Plan may do so by contacting David Johnson, Supervisor of Maintenance, at (269) 539-5233.

NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Van Buren Intermediate School District does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex (including gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or a related condition), age, height, weight, familial status, marital status, military service, veteran status, genetic information, disability, or any other legally protected characteristic. It prohibits unlawful discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, in any educational program or activity it operates, including admissions and employment. Inquiries regarding unlawful discrimination, including unlawful harassment and retaliation, should be directed to the designated Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator, HR Administrator, 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence MI 49064, 269-539-5439, hr@vbisd.org. and/or to an agency with jurisdiction, such as the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the Department of Justice.

NOTIFICATION OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The educational interests of the student require the collection, retention, and use of information about individual students and groups of students. At the same time, the student's right of privacy mandates careful custodianship and limitations on access to student records. Only "directory information" regarding a student shall be released to any person or party, other than the student or his/her parent, without the written consent of the parent; or, if the student is an eligible student, the written consent of the student, except those persons or parties stipulated by the Board's policy and administrative guidelines and/or those in the law. In compliance with Federal regulation, Van Buren Intermediate School District has established the following guidelines concerning student records.

1. Director of Finance and Operations is the Records Control Officer for the District and is responsible for the processing and maintenance of all student records. The office is located at the Van Buren Conference Center, 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064, (269) 674-8091.
2. Each student's records will be kept in a confidential file located at the respective building location. The information in a student's record file will be available for review only by the parents or legal guardian of a student, an adult student (18 years of age or older), and those designated by Federal Law or District regulations.
3. If not satisfied with the accuracy of the records or the District's compliance with the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act, a parent, guardian, or adult student has the right to request a change or addition to a student's records, and to:
   A. Obtain a hearing with District Officials, or
   B. File a complaint with the U.S. Office of Education
      Family Policy Compliance Office
      US Department of Education
      400 Maryland Ave, SW
      Washington, DC 20202-5920
4. The District has established the following information about each student as directory information and will make it available upon a legitimate request unless a parent, guardian, or adult student notifies the Records Control Office by completing a Directory Information Opt Out Form of any or all information:
   A. student's name, addresses, and telephone numbers;date of birth;
   B. major field of study;
   C. grade level;
   D. enrollment status (e.g. full-time or part-time);
   E. dates of attendance;
   F. participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
   G. weight and height of athletic team members;
   H. degrees, honors, and awards received; and
   I. photographs and videos depicting a student's participation in school-related activities and classes.; and
   J. the most recent educational agency or institution attended.
   K. A copy of the Board of Education's policy 5309 and the accompanying District regulations are available at the District's website www.vbisd.org . There will also be a person available to answer any questions concerning the policy or regulations.

PESTICIDE CONTROL ACT - PA 451

The Van Buren Intermediate School District has adopted an Integrated Pest Management program. Inherent with this are the District's efforts to reduce pesticide use as much as possible. While it may occasionally be necessary to apply a pesticide, these will only be used as a last resort. This program does not rely on routine pesticide applications to resolve problems. We use various techniques such as habitat alteration, sanitation, mechanical means, exclusion, etc. to prevent pest from becoming a problem.

You will receive advanced notice of the application of a pesticide, other than bait or gel formulations at your child's school. This advance notice of the application will be given 48 hours before the application. The law requires us to do this notification by using two methods. The first method required by the law is the posting at the primary entrances to your child's school. The entrances that will be posted are those entrances that have a sidewalk that leads directly to a parking lot. The second method we are going to use is the posting in a common area located by the main office of the school. Parents are also entitled to receive this notice by first-class United States mail postmarked at least three days before the application. If you would like to be notified by mail please contact David Johnson, Maintenance Supervisor at (269) 539-5233. Please give your name, mailing address and what school your child attends. In an emergency (for example, bees nest), pesticides may be applied without prior notice, but you will be provided notice following any such application. You may review our IPM program or pesticide application records for your child's school by contacting David Johnson at (269) 539-5233 or email djohnson@vbisd.org. This number or e-mail may also be used when school is not in regular session.

SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES ACT

Van Buren Intermediate School District recognizes and abides by the standards of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug Free Workplace Act. These standards prohibit the unlawful manufacture, possession, use, sale, distribution, or concealment of illegal drugs and alcohol in school programs, school vehicles, school premises, and at school sponsored activities on and off school property. Drugs include all controlled substances as defined by law, as well as "look-alike" drugs, steroids, and alcohol. These standards apply to all Van Buren Intermediate School District students. We urge students, parents, guardians, and care providers to work together with our district to ensure that these important standards are upheld.

The Van Buren Intermediate School District does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex (including gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or a related condition), age, height, weight, familial status, marital status, military service, veteran status, genetic information, disability, or any other legally protected characteristic. It prohibits unlawful discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, in any educational program or activity it operates, including admissions and employment.
Inquiries regarding unlawful discrimination, including unlawful harassment and retaliation, should be directed to the designated Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator, HR Administrator, 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence MI 49064, 269-539-5439**, hr@vbisd.org.** and/or to an agency with jurisdiction, such as the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the Department of Justice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PAW PAW TOWNSHIP
SYNOPSIS OF MEETING
JULY 14, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Called to Order by Supervisor Palenick 6:00 P.M.

- Board Members Present: Thomas Palenick, James DeGroff, Dennis Reynolds, Rebecca Payne, Lisa Zinkil
- Absent: None
- Guest Present: Tony Thompson, Greg Nitzel, Mike Wilson.
- Approved July 14th, 2025, meeting minutes.
- Approved the Bid from Vogt's Snow Removal for resealing the drives in Cuddeback Cemetery.
- Approved Resolution 250811-1-1 Lake Cora SAD
- Approved Resolution 250811-2 Sewer rate increase.
- Approved Ordinance 293 Off-Site Accessory Buildings

Meeting Adjourned 7:40 P.M.
Rebecca F. Payne, Clerk

PORTER TOWNSHIP VAN BUREN COUNTY
88040 M-40 LAWTON, MI 49065
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 9, 2025

Supervisor Oxley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. Also present – Attorney Moraitis and one guest.

- Motion by Nesbitt with support by Bitely to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on June 11, 2025. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Nesbitt with support by Smith to approve the minutes of the special meeting on June 25, 2025. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Smith with support by Packer to approve the Treasurer's report subject to audit. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Nesbitt with support by Packer to approve the bills as presented. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Bitely with support by Nesbitt to approve the updated Mechanical & Plumbing Inspector contracts. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Bitely with support by Packer to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 pm. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heather Smith
Porter Township Clerk

State of Michigan
36th Judicial Circuit - Family Division
Van Buren County
Publication of Hearing
Case No. 25020152 NA

TO: Natasha Rogers
IN THE MATTER OF:
Trenton Rogers and Richard Rogers

A hearing regarding Family Court Dench Trialwill be conducted by the court on September 17,2025 (09/17/2025) at 9:30 am in Courtroom 2, 212 E. Paw Paw St., Paw Paw, MI 49079 before Judge Jeffrey Dufon.
You have the right to an attorney and the right to a trial by judge or jury.
IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED Natasha Rogers that personally appear before the court at the time and place stated above.
This hearing may result in Court Jurisdiction over your minor children.

State of Michigan
36th Judicial Circuit - Family Division
Van Buren County
Publication of Hearing
(Notice to Putative Father)
Case No. 25020170 NA

IN MATTER OF: Josue Palacio-Gonzalez
TAKE NOTICE:
Natural father of Josue Palacio-Gonzalez
A petition has been filed with this court regarding the following minor(s): Josue Palacio-Gonzalez who was born on January 3, 2025 (1/3/2025) at Corwell Health in Grand Rapids, Michigan.
The mother of the minor(s) is **Sandra Palacio-Gonzalez.** If you are or may be the natural father, you should appear at Circuit Courtroom 2, 212 E. Paw Paw St., Paw Paw, MI on September 10,2025 at 9:30 am to state any interest you may have in the minor(s).
Failure to appear at this hearing is a denial of interest in the minor(s), waiver of notice for all subsequent hearings, and a waiver of a right to appointment of an attorney. Failure to appear at this hearing **COULD RESULT IN PERMANENT TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS.**

State of Michigan Probate Court
County of Van Buren
Notice to Creditors Decedent's Trust Estate
DECEDENT: EDWARD O. WILSON
DATE OF BIRTH: MARCH 11,1956
TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **EDWARD O. WILSON,** who lived at 32822 Robin Rd., Paw Paw, Michigan 49079 died July 2, 2025. There is no probate estate.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against **EDWARD O. WILSON** or The **EDWARD O. WILSON IRREVOCABLE TRUST dated October 6,2016, as amended and restated in total on July 7,2022,** will be forever barred unless presented to **MARY BETH DAVIS**, the named successor trustee withing 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
August 13,2025

Attorney
Tyler J. Stweart #P80750
DeMent and Marquardt, PLC
211 E. Water Street, Suite 401
Van Buren, MI 49007
(269) 343-2106
Petitioner
Mary Beth Davis
32822 Robin Rd.
Paw Paw, MI 49079
(269) 365-8838

State of Michigan Probate Court
Van buren County
Notice to Creditors Decedent's Estate
Case No. - • Judge Hon. Susan Durian Metzger
Estate of ROY J. DIETRICH
TO ALL CREDITORS
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Roy J. Dietrich, died October 26,2024 (10/26/2024)
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to James R. Dietrich personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw Street, Suite 220, Paw Paw, Mi 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
August 13,2025

Attorney
Christopher N. Moraitis P87052
181 West Michigan Ave.,
Ste. 1, P.O.Box 520
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-3177
Personal Representative
James R. Dietrich
24789 Wise Road
Gobles, MI 49055
269-657-4644

State of Michigan Probate Court
Van buren County
Notice to Creditors Decedent's Estate
Case No. 2025-1124-DE
Estate of DARRYL JAMES KETCHUM
Date of birth MARCH 17, 1955
TO ALL CREDITORS
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Darryl James Ketchum, died October 17,2023 (10/17/2023)
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Dennis Ketchum personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw Street, Suite 220, Paw Paw, Mi 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
August 13,2025

Attorney
Shaun B. Isgrigg #P78232
2745 Pontiac Lake Road
Waterford, Michigan 48328
248-682-8800
Personal Representative
Dennis Ketchum
2565 S. 26th St.
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49048
269-873-3357

Van Buren; Mtgr: Steven P Koenig; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 7/31/2025; Atty File #: 20-000386-2; Insurer: (unknown)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on August 28, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Steven P. Koenig, AKA Steven Koenig, a single man Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: June 1, 2004 Recorded on June 9, 2004, Liber 1415, on Page 570, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, as Trustee for the benefit of the Freddie Mac Seasoned Credit Risk Transfer Trust, Series 2021-3 Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Forty Thousand Two Hundred Sixty-Eight and 45/100 Dollars ($40,268.45) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: Commencing at a point found by starting at the Northwest corner of Section 28, Town 4 South, Range 13 West. Thence Easterly on the Section line 99 rods, thence South parallel with the West line of said Section 2814 feet, thence South 33 degrees 48` West 356 feet to the point of beginning of this description, thence continuing South 33 degrees 48` West 60 feet, thence South 52 degrees 8` East to Cedar Lake, thence Northeasterly along said Lake to a point which is South 51 degrees 52` East from said point of beginning, thence North 51 degrees 52` West to said point of beginning. Also, a non-exclusive easement for ingress and egress in common with others beginning at a point found by commencing at the Northwest corner of Section 28, Town 4 South, Range 13 West; thence Easterly on the North line of said Section, 99 rods; thence South parallel with the West line of said Section, 2814 feet to the point of beginning of this description; thence South 33 degrees 48` West 536 feet; thence North 52 degrees 34` West 33.07 feet; thence North 33 degrees 48` East 464.57 feet; thence North parallel with the West line of said Section to the centerline of Shaw Road; thence Easterly along said centerline to a point 99 rods Easterly of the West line of said Section 28; thence South to said point of beginning. Commonly known as 29383 Shaw Rd, Lawton, MI 49065 The redemption period will be 12 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, as Trustee for the benefit of the Freddie Mac Seasoned Credit Risk Transfer Trust, Series 2021-3 Mortgagee/ Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400
1568194

(07-31)(08-21)

Van Buren; Mtgr: Linda Smith; Atty: Team J; 1st Pub: 8/7/2025; Atty File #: 378790F03; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on September 11, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Linda Smith, a single woman
Original Mortgagee: ABN AMRO Mortgage Group, Inc.
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, as Trustee for the benefit of the Freddie Mac Seasoned Loans Structured Transaction Trust, Series 2021-2
Date of Mortgage: January 12, 2001
Date of Mortgage Recording: January 17, 2001
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $88,994.65
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Bloomingdale, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing 93 rods 15 feet North of the Southwest corner of the Southeast Quarter of Section 33, Town 1 South, Range 14 West, according to the Government Survey thereof; Thence North 30 rods 5 feet; Thence Easterly to the North and South One Eighth line of said Southeast Quarter; Thence South on same 30 rods 5 feet; Thence Westerly to beginning
Common street address (if any): 22501 41st St, Bloomingdale, MI 49026-9759
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: August 7, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1568734
(08-07)(08-28)

Van Buren; Mtgr: RON CRAFT; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 8/7/2025; Atty File #: 25-002098-1; Insurer: (unknown)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on September 04, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): RON CRAFT and SUZANNE BURROWS-CRAFT, Husband and Wife Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: April 28, 2004 Recorded on May 11, 2004, Liber 1413, on Page 644, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON FKA THE BANK OF NEW YORK, AS TRUSTEE FOR THE CERTIFICATEHOLDERS OF THE CWABS INC., ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2004-6 Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Fifty Thousand Five Hundred Sixty-Seven and 41/100 Dollars ($50,567.41) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: BEGINNING ON THE NORTH LINE OF CASS STREET AT A POINT 465.00 FEET EAST OF THE WEST SECTION LINE; THENCE WEST, 102.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH, 86.50 FEET; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY PARALLEL WITH MONROE STREET, 112.20 FEET; THENCE SOUTHERLY TO BEGINNING, BEING A PART OF BLOCK 8, MONROE`S ADDITION TO THE CITY OF BANGOR, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN AS RECORDED IN LIBER 1 OF PLATS, PAGE 17, VAN BUREN COUNTY RECORDS. Commonly known as 108 E Cass St, Bangor, MI 49013 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON FKA THE BANK OF NEW YORK, AS TRUSTEE FOR THE CERTIFICATEHOLDERS OF THE CWABS INC., ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2004-6 Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400
1568789
(08-07)(08-28)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Michael Mascarello; Atty: Team H; 1st Pub: 8/14/2025; Atty File #: 456499F09; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on September 18, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Michael Mascarello, an unmarried man
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Deutsche Bank National Trust Company, as trustee for Securitized Asset Backed Receivables LLC Trust 2007-BR4, Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2007-BR4
Date of Mortgage: January 26, 2007
Date of Mortgage Recording: February 12, 2007
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $68,226.43
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Village of Lawton, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 4, Willow Beach, according to the recorded plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 1 of Plats on Page 25, Van Buren County, Michigan Register of Deed Records.
Common street address (if any): 94963 Lakeview Ct, Lawton, MI 49065-9205
The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: August 14, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1569126

(08-14)(09-04

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: MTCT46 LLC; Atty: KREIS ENDERLE - KALAMAZOO - KREIS ENDERLE - KALAMAZOO; 1st Pub: 8/21/2025; Atty File #: (N/A); Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE OF LIEN AGAINST CONDOMINIUM UNIT IN OLD HARBOR VILLAGE CONDOMINIUM NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT.
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the certain Lien Against Condominium Unit in Old Harbor Village Condominium ("Lien") will be foreclosed by a sale of the premises (as defined below) at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the Circuit Court in Van Buren County, Michigan, starting promptly at 1:00 p.m., on September 25, 2025. The amount due on the Lien may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the premises. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than ninety (90) days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the Lien at the telephone number stated in this notice. The Old Harbor Village Condominium Association recorded the aforementioned Lien, dated December 9, 2024, against the premises owned by MTCT46 LLC, a Michigan limited liability company, which address is 515 Williams Street, South Haven, Michigan 49090 ("Owner"), which premises are a Unit in the Old Harbor Village Condominium. The Lien was recorded on December 9, 2024, in the Van Buren County Register of Deeds, at Liber 1772, Page 974. As of August 21, 2025, the amount claimed to be due under the Lien is the sum of Nine Thousand Three Hundred Seventy-Six and 70/100 Dollars ($9,376.70), including interest and attorney fees. This sum will increase as additional interest, costs, expenses, and attorney fees accrue and which are permitted under Michigan law. Under the power of sale contained in the Condominium Bylaws and under Section 108 of the Michigan Condominium Act, as amended, notice is hereby given that the Lien will be foreclosed by sale of the premises at public sale to the highest bidder at the Van Buren County Courthouse, which address is 212 East Paw Paw Street, 2nd Floor, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079, and which is the place of the holding of the Circuit Court for Van Buren County, State of Michigan, on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. The premises subject to the Lien is situated in the City of South Haven, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan and legally described as follows: Unit 13, Old Harbor Village Condominium, a Condominium according to the Master Deed recorded in Liber 813, Page 616, as amended, in the Office of the Van Buren County Register of Deeds, and designated as Van Buren County Condominium Subdivision Plan No. 17, together with rights in general common elements and limited common elements as set forth in said Master Deed, and amendments thereto, and described in Act 59 of Public Acts of 1978 as amended. Parcel Address: 515 Williams Street, Unit 13, South Haven, Michigan 49090 Parcel Tax ID: 80-53-775-006-30 If the premises is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be six (6) months from the date of sale, unless the premises is abandoned, in which case the redemption period is one (1) month. If the premises are sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the Owner and any other person liable on the Lien will be held responsible to the person who buys the premises at the foreclosure sale or to the Lien holder for damaging the premises during the redemption period. Dated: August 21, 2025 LIEN HOLDER: Old Harbor Village Condominium Association 515 Williams Street, P.O. Box 46 South Haven, Michigan 49090 Attorneys for the Old Harbor Village Condominium Association: Kreis, Enderle, Hudgins & Borsos, P.C. Attention: Jeffrey D. Swenarton 750 Trade Centre Way, Suite 250 Portage, Michigan 49002 (269) 324-3000

(08-21)(09-11)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Joan Lewis; Atty: Team H; 1st Pub: 8/14/2025; Atty File #: 525284F01; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on September 18, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Jean G. Murphy aka Jean Murphy and Joan Lewis, as joint tenants with full rights of survivorship and not as tenants in common
Original Mortgagee: New Century Mortgage Corporation
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. as successor by merger to Wells Fargo Bank Minnesota, National Association, as Trustee for the registered holders of the Merrill Lynch Mortgage Investors, Inc., Mortgage Loan Asset Backed Certificates Series 2002-NC1
Date of Mortgage: March 1, 2002
Date of Mortgage Recording: December 17, 2002
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $50,308.06
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in City of South Haven, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 24, Block 11 of Ravinia Park Addition to the City of South Haven, according to the plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 3, Page 58.
Common street address (if any): 529 Elkenburg St, South Haven, MI 49090-1906
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: August 14, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1569436

(08-14)(09-04)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Tara Lynne Colvin; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 8/14/2025; Atty File #: 25-002230-1; Insurer: (unknown)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on September 11,

Continues on page 11

PUBLIC NOTICE

Continues from page 10

2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Tara Lynne Colvin, a woman Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: April 17, 2014 Recorded on May 1, 2014, Liber 1602, on Page 465, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Morgan Stanley Private Bank, National Association Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: One Hundred Twenty Thousand Eight Hundred Six and 03/100 Dollars ($120,806.03) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: LOT 48, ROLLING MEADOWS, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN LIBER 8 OF PLATS ON PAGE 118, VAN BUREN COUNTY RECORDS. Commonly known as 54101 Ridgeview Cir, Paw Paw, MI 49079 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Morgan Stanley Private Bank, National Association Mortgagee/ Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400
1569474

(08-14)(09-04)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: James F Molnar; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 8/21/2025; Atty File #: 22-003040-3; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on September 25, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): James F. Molnar and Barbara L. Molnar, husband and wife Original Mortgagee: The Huntington National Bank s/b/m TCF National Bank s/b/m Chemical Bank s/b/m Chemical Bank Shoreline f/k/a Shoreline Bank Date of mortgage: July 29, 1998 Recorded on August 4, 1998, Liber 1187, on Page 843, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): None Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Thirty-Two Thousand Nine Hundred Sixteen and 88/100 Dollars ($32,916.88) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: The East 210 feet of the North 1/2 of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4 of Section 17, Town 1 South, Range 14 West, except the South 30 feet thereof. Commonly known as 520 N Van Buren St, Bloomingdale, MI 49026 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale will be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's attorney. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. The Huntington National Bank s/b/m TCF National Bank s/b/m Chemical Bank s/b/m Chemical Bank Shoreline f/k/a Shoreline Bank Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400
1570089

(08-21)(09-11)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR MICHIGAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FUNDING FOR VAN BUREN COUNTY HOME REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Van Buren County will conduct a public hearing on **August 26, 2025, at 12:50 PM at 219 E. Paw Paw Street, Suite 202, Paw Paw, MI 49079** for the purpose of affording citizens an opportunity to examine and submit comments on the proposed application for a Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

Van Buren County proposes to use **$472,000** in CDBG funds for repairs and improvements to homes located within the County and occupied by low- and moderate-income homeowners, addressing health, safety, and energy efficiency needs. The project will benefit at least **51% low- to moderate-income** persons. Zero persons will be displaced as a result of the proposed activities.

A copy of the proposed grant application is available for public inspection during normal business hours at the County Clerk's Office, **212 E. Paw Paw Street, Suite 101 Paw Paw, Michigan,** and on the County website at **www.vanburencountymi.gov.**

Interested parties are invited to comment on the proposed project during the public hearing or in advance of the hearing in writing. Written comments may be submitted by email to **clerk@vanburencountymi.gov** or by phone at **(269) 657-8218,** option 6, no later than two business days before the meeting. Comments may also be mailed or delivered to the County Clerk at **219 E. Paw Paw Street, Sute 101 Paw Paw, MI 49079.**

Van Buren County will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at any meeting/hearing upon **ten (10) days' notice** to the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners' Office. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact Van Buren County by writing to **Emani Tunstall, 219 E. Paw Paw St., Suite 201, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079,** or by calling the Board of Commissioners' Office at **(269) 657-8253.**

Suzie Roehm, Van Buren County Clerk
August 18, 2025

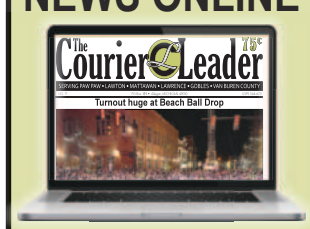
NOTICE OF PAW PAW TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

The Paw Paw Township Board of Trustees approved an amendment to Section 5.08 of the Paw Paw Township Zoning Ordinance to allow off-site accessory buildings under certain circumstances as special land uses.

Copies of related materials and the full Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map are available for review at the Paw Paw Township Hall during regular business hours (114 N. Gremps St., Paw Paw, MI, 49079). Relevant information is available by request- call 269-657-4340 or email clerk@pawpawtownship.org.

Planning Commission Public Hearing:
July 15, 2025
Township Board Adoption: August 11, 2025
Publication Date: August 21, 2025
Effective Date: August 28, 2025

GET YOUR NEWS ONLINE



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VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
COUNTY OF VAN BUREN
STATE OF MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION # 2025 – 05

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH RATES FOR SEWER SERVICE

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Village Council of the Village of Mattawan, held on May 27, 2025 at the Village Hall in the Village of Mattawan, which commenced at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Begeman, Cole, McLean, Smith, Streeter, Stuut
ABSENT: None

The following resolution was offered by Smith and supported by Stuut.

Resolution Establishing Rates for Sewer Service

WHEREAS, the Village of Mattawan Ordinance 28, as amended, requires the Mattawan Village Council to establish by Resolution the rates to be charged for sewer service; and

WHEREAS, the Village Council has determined that an adjustment in sewer rate is necessary in order to adequately fund the operations of the Village Sewer System;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following rates are established for charges to be paid by users of sewer service provided by the Village of Mattawan effective on July 1, 2025.

a. Users shall be charged $10.00 per 1,000 gallons used/ $15.00 per 1,000 gallons for users outside the Village;
a. All prior resolutions establishing rates for sewer service are hereby rescinded.

AYES: Begeman, Cole, McLean, Smith, Streeter, Stuut
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
RESOLUTION DELCARED ADOPTED

Jolie Storm-Artis
Jolie Storm-Artis, Village Clerk

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Village Council of the Village of Mattawan, County of Van Buren, Michigan at a meeting held on May 27, 2025.

Jolie Storm-Artis
Jolie Storm-Artis, Village Clerk

VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
COUNTY OF VAN BUREN
STATE OF MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION # 2025 - 06

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH RATES FOR WATER SERVICE

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Village Council of the Village of Mattawan, held on May 27, 2025 at the Village Hall in the Village of Mattawan, which commenced at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Begeman, Cole, McLean, Smith, Streeter, Stuut
ABSENT: None

The following resolution was offered by McLean and supported by Stuut .

Resolution Establishing Rates for Water Service

WHEREAS, the Village of Mattawan Ordinance 28, as Amended, requires the Mattawan Village Council to establish by Resolution the rates to be charged for water service; and

WHEREAS, the Village Council has determined that an increase in water rates is appropriate in order to adequately fund the operations of the Village Water System;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the following rates are established for charges to be paid by users of water service provided by the Village of Mattawan effective on July 1, 2025.

a. Users shall be charged $6.23 per 1,000 gallons used / $9.35 per 1,000 gallons used to all users outside the Village;
b. All prior resolutions establishing rates for water service are hereby rescinded.

AYES: Begeman, Cole, McLean, Smith, Streeter, Stuut
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Jolie Storm-Artis
Jolie Storm-Artis, Village Clerk

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Village Council of the Village of Mattawan, County of Van Buren, Michigan, at a regular meeting held on May 27, 2025.

Jolie Storm-Artis
Jolie Storm-Artis, Village Clerk

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• AUCTION •

ALL SECURE SELF STORAGE will hold sale of abandoned property at a public sale pursuant in 540.521-570.527: Public Auction: 8/26/2025 at or after 9:30a.m. EST: 37404 W Red Arrow Highway Paw Paw: Dylan Barker, 38; Michael Wagner, 74; Terry Mayer, 94; Kimberly Widelski, 332; David Wigner, 329; Jennifer Strey, 315..

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Lawton opens storybook trail honoring longtime library worker

The village of Lawton is opening a new chapter of family fun with the Anne Coombs Memorial Storybook Trail, inviting hikers to take a storybook-themed stroll in honor of the town's late library worker.

The trail, located behind St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 63855 North M-40 Highway, just north of Lawton, is about 850 yards long and features 10 "storybook stations," each revealing the next page of a children's book.

"My mom had a flair for making every story fun," said Susan Woodruff, Coombs' daughter and one of the driving forces behind the trail's creation.

Coombs, who worked at the Lawton Public Library for 37 years, "enriched the community through her love and dedication to the world of books, sharing a passion for reading with a generation of kids," Woodruff added.

The goal is to continue Coombs's love of the written word through the interactive trail, which rewards visitors who complete it with prizes such as free books and ice cream.

It's also designed as a place where families can unplug from technology and enjoy whimsical touches such as fairy dwellings, teapot motifs, and hidden elements along the path.

Opened in July, the trail will feature a new story each month through October. Children ages 2 to 11 who visit can stop by the Lawton Library to receive a free book. In August, kids can also participate in a visual scavenger hunt and earn a free ice cream cone at the Modern Well.

"October plans are not finalized, but there will be some kind of little token for kids who visit," Woodruff said.

The project was a joint effort between the St. Paul's UMC Ladies Fellowship, which funded the trail; St. Paul's United Methodist Church and Pastor Ashlei Horn; and the Coombs family. Woodruff's husband, Mike, built the book stands and installed benches and visual elements for the different stations.

All are welcome to explore the community trail, created in honor of one of Lawton's most beloved residents. Coombs died in December 2022 at age 90.

"She had many passions in life, but her greatest were family, church, community, and reading," Woodruff said. "Our hope is that families will visit the trail for years to come, making memories along the way."

Super Saturday enjoyed in Lawrence park

The Lawrence Branch Library teamed up with the Lawrence Farmers' Market to present the annual Super Saturday in the Park, Aug. 26. The event saw more than 20 vendors set up in the Lawrence Village Park selling art, crafts, food, plants, vegetables, and more. Courier-Leader photos/Paul Garrod

Friends of the Lawrence Library to hold Labor Day weekend book sale

Calling all book lovers – new, used and gently used books, bestsellers, hardcovers, videos, DVDs, audio books, paperbacks, mysteries, romance, science fiction, children's books and more are available at low, low prices at the Friends of the Lawrence Library Labor Day Weekend Book Sale, Saturday, Aug. 30, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 31, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Monday, Sept.1, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The sale will be held at the Lawrence Old Town Hall, 122 W. St. Joseph St., Lawrence.

There are thousands of titles to choose from with expanded sale hours, according to event organizers.

The Labor Day Weekend Book Sale is open to the public with free admission.

All sales are final. All proceeds from the sale will benefit programs and activities of the Lawrence Branch of the Van Buren District Library, 212 N. Paw Paw St., Lawrence.

For information about the sale, the Lawrence Branch Library programs or to volunteer to help at the Book Sale, call (269) 674-3200 or go to: www.booksalefinder.com or visit the library website at: www.vbdl.org to find out about the many services Van Buren District Library system has to offer.

Van Buren District Library is headquartered in Decatur with branches in Bangor, Bloomingdale, Covert, Decatur, Gobles, Lawrence and Mattawan.

FULL TIME SUB BUS DRIVER

Gobles Public Schools has a full time sub bus driver position available to qualified applicants. This position begins when filled. The position will be six hours per day, five days a week with variable hours dictated by the district. Duties will include, but are not limited to sub bus route driving including Votech and Special Ed/ McKinney Vento runs. This position will also cover radio and any other transportation related needs. This position has a competitive pay rate that includes District retirement and health plan for the individual or an option to take cash in lieu.

FREE TRAINING

If interested, applicants should send an email of interest and resume to: Chris Miller, Director of Operations @ chris.miller@gobles.org OR Transportation Supervisor Josh Satkey @ josh.satkey@gobles.org

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